



AAN NEWCOMERS WITH DISABILITIES

Date/Time:
June 28th, 2022 / 1:00PM – 3:00PM

Location: Zoom

Chairs: Mezaun Lakha-Evin, Michael Farr

In Attendance:

Mezaun Lakha-Evin (AAN)
Michael Farr (EmployAbilities)
Maria Mora (Centre for Newcomers)
Michelle Ledo (CIWA)
Nada Starcevic (AAISA)
Christopher Gordon (Community Advocate)

Meri Topchieva (AAN)
Greg McMeekin (Office of the Advocate for Persons with Disabilities)
Sarosh Rizvi (AAISA)
Lori James (Pacekids Programs)
Christian Ladores (AAISA)

Meeting Minutes

Land Acknowledgement
Welcome and Introductions

Review/Approval of previous meeting's minutes

Topics of Discussion:

Survey dissemination

- We distributed a survey to discuss and address the table's priorities.
- The two priorities discussed were 1) Assessments for newcomers with disabilities and how we can make them more accessible, and 2) Welcome packages upon arrival to Canada.
- Information is very fragmented throughout the disability and settlement sectors. We need to know how many newcomers get assessments when arriving in Canada. In order to do that, we need to recruit more members from the healthcare, government, and the IRCC sectors.

Disability Info Sheet:

- Create a disability information sheet for newcomers with disabilities so they can access the resources they need in a fast and accessible manner.

Recruitment feedback

- Many organizations that Mezaun contacted for recruitment were settlement agencies from rural areas. Many of the workers/team leads are newcomers themselves and did not have a good understanding of the disability sector.
- There are many pre-conceived biases that influence how people view "disability". When asked how many peoples with disabilities agencies serve, they only included people with visible physical disabilities.



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Recruitment letter

According to the Government of Canada, 1 in 5 people has a disability. Disabilities can be visible, invisible, permanent, or temporary.

- We have drafted a recruitment letter to potential stakeholders inviting them to this table.
- Please click here to view the letter and make recommendations:
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1SQMkqbQ9UoULhNYfFScfgUNdAoDw67RsLminGSedmjs/edit>

Recommendations for Recruitment Letter

- How is it going to help the work that settlement agencies are currently doing?
- What is the benefit to agencies of them being a part of AAN?
- Use a story that can resonate with agencies.
- Approach the letter through the lens of an agency with minimal resources and suggest ways they can improve the impact they're making.
- 22.3% of Canada's population identify as a person with a disability. Recognize that at least 20% of an agency's clients have a disability whether diagnosed or not.

Agency Updates

Employ Abilities

- Michael will wait until AAISA has distributed the overview of disabilities for settlement workers in Canada toolkit before distributing it with the table.

AAISA

- Christian Ladores has recently joined AAISA as the Project Lead for the RDSP initiative.

Action Items:

- Review the recruitment letter and give us feedback.
- Reach out to 3 different individuals or agencies that you think would benefit from sitting on this table and share with them what the table is working on and how they can benefit from it.

Wrap-Up/Adjournment

Next meeting:

Date: September 27th, 2022

Time: 1:30PM – 3:30PM

Location: Zoom

Please note that there are no meetings for July and August. Have a great summer!